

The influence of Samaveda on music

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सामजात जलाकीर्णम् छन्दाकक्षौक सुकृतम् ।
तंत्रग्राहान्वितम् वन्दे सामनेतुमहाशिवम् ॥

Music can be defined as a special kind of sound or Vidya, which brings us immense joy. Samyak geetam Sangeetam is its simple definition. Music which has evolved in India that is Bharat, and imbued the atmosphere and spirit of spiritual India is known as Bharateeya Sangita or Indian Music. It has a special character of its own. It differs from the music of other countries. Though it is influenced by foreign music and cultures, it has preserved its own quality and nature. It has absorbed foreign materials in an unifying method (Swami Prajnananda). Its sweet soothing sounds, touch the heart, creating an inexpressible aesthetic feeling, bringing permanent peace and solace to the human mind.

Music has seven notes - Sa re ga ma pa da ni. If these are combined to form a compound word it becomes - Sarigamapadani. This word is formed of by three words - Sari, gama and padani. Sari in Sanskrit means a boat (that which moves in water without impediments); gama means to enable or make it available; pada means position and ni means to give. It means the boat which

✓ xc. with compliments from Nagarajan

enables us to cross the ocean of Samsara and the path to realise God.

Musicologists are of the opinion that the music of nations of the world has its root in the Supreme Sound known as Sphota or Sabda Brahman. According to the Mahabhasya, the casual sound gives birth to speech and music. Music manifests in two ways — Aahata and anahata — the manifested and unmanifested. Aahata Nada is the caused by the friction of Vital air (Prana) with heat-energy (agni); sound generates and manifests. This is called Nada; God is Nada Brahman. It can be said that music is the gift of nature to man.

Our Sastras have termed music as Gandharva Veda. This is a subsidiary Veda of Sama Veda. Our ancient forefathers have shown different paths to realise God. Music is one of them. This path is known as Sangitopasana, as stated by Matsyendranarayan Sarabvati in his 'Advaita Siddhi'. In the life of man, happiness and sorrow will not in equal measure. Generally, sorrow is in greater proportion. Music is the most important means to get freed from worldly sorrows and worries. Sage Vyasa (14th cent.) has described the aim and greatness of music in the following verse: -

संसारदुःखद्वानां उत्तमानामुन्मुखात् ।

प्रमुखा इकडेनात्र गीतविद्या प्रकाशिता ॥

" Music has been gifted by God Sankara to emancipate the good from the sufferings and sorrows of Samsara. To cross the ocean

of Sambara and easily realise God, is the aim of music' Says Saint Tyagaraja (త్యాగరాజ ఆచార్యుని దర్శనం) in his Athana Raga Composition 'అజనసేవశా'.

Veda: The word Veda is derived from the root Vid - Vid gyane; Vedayati means to give knowledge and hence, the Veda has received the highest recognition. The word Vid indicates three ideas - (1) to be or exist - Sat, (2) to know - Chit (3) to receive or get ie. Rasa or ananda. and Veda suggests Sachitananda. Veda means knowledge, and this knowledge is spiritual. As it expounds Supra Sensual Subject, it is Veda. of the four purusharthas or goals of life, artha - wealth and Kama desires can be understood and realised by worldly affairs. But, for the knowledge of Dharma and moksha Righteousness and Salvation, knowledge of the Vedas is necessary. As logic is unlimited, the apaurusha Veda Vidya is means to Realisation - Says Adi Sankaracharya. Though it is accepted as the word of God through the Sages and though it has used many words related to the material world, the Veda is the embodiment of the All-Knowing.

Though Veda is one, for purposes of application, it has been divided by Maharshi Veda Vyasa into Rg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda - Rg Veda for the attainment of knowledge, Yajur Veda for yagnas or sacrifices, Sama Veda for music and Atharva for material progress. The Taittiriya Brahmana Says that Sama refers to the Tejas -

effulgence, aspect of Brahman (स्मृतिज्ञः सामरूपः शिवः). Hence, Lord Krishna has said that He is the Sama Veda (वेदानां सामवेदीस्मि). In addition to the Vedas, several Shrutis, Smritis, Prashnopanishad, Manusmriti, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shrimad Bhagavata and the Puranas contain praises about the greatness of Samaveda.

वाचः ऋजसः ऋचः सामवसः साम उद्गीमोऽसः (Ch. U.).

— The speech organ is the essence of the organs of the human being; RK is pronounced by this organ and hence, RK is the essence of the speech organ; Sama gives ananda or joy and hence, it is the essence of RK; Udgitha is the part of Sama and it is omkara which encompasses all sounds and Udgitha is the essence of Sama and worthy of meditation like the Lord.

Sama means tranquillity. It endows peace to us who suffer in the mundane life. This is the highest aim of Samaveda. It is the auspicious music which is achieved by our Vedic Rishis. Its inherent divinity has the power to bestow peace and joy to humanity. Hence, Samaveda is said to be the essence of all the Vedas (सर्वेषां ना एव वेदानां रसो यत्सामः) (Satapatha). It has given a divine sound to all the matras.

Every Veda according to recension has Brahmanas and other texts attached to it. The texts related to Samaveda are —

- (1) Brahmana: Taandvi, Shadvimsha, Devataashyaya, Sama Vihana, Arbhya, Chandogya Vamba, Samhitopanishad.
- (2) Chandogya, Kena. — Upnishads
- (3) Srauta Sutra: Satyayana, Brahmagyana, Jaiminiga.

(4) Grihya Sutra - Khadira, Gubhila,

According to Upanishads, Sama means Song. Sa means Rik or word; ama means Svara or Vitalic air or frame. When Sa and ma mingle, it becomes Sama. (सा नाम ऋक्, अम नाम सरः । ऋक् स्वरोः संयोगात् साम शब्दो निष्पन्नः (Ch. Vp). Mere Rik or Svara cannot be ~~Sama~~ Sama. These are mutually dependent. When they mingle, they become Sama. (ऋक् वे माता, साम पिता - Ch. Vp). To develop from the known Svaras is the refuge of Sama.

(का साम्ना गतिराश्रयः परायण इत्येतत् (Ch. V).
'विनिधि साम्नाः वृणीः' - the Upasana of Samagana which is pleasant, soft, melodious, majestic and benefic having special notes should be done. The Jainmuniya Sakta has emphasised that the Soul of Sama Veda is music -
"गीतीषु सामारव्या"

Sama Veda is the Veda ready to be sung by the Udgata. Among its 2639 mantras, except for 75 ones, the others are Rig Vedic Riks. These Riks are part of the Sakala Samhita. The other 75 must have belonged to the Baskala Samhita, which is not available. Rig Veda is the maatu (मातृ) and Sama Veda is the Dhatu (धातु).

It is usual to classify music into two types - Margi (मार्गी) and Dasi (दासी). Matanga, in his 'Brihaddesi' says that to express the draga according to the process laid down in definite situations is Margi music. Dasi music means the music of the regions. It is laukika or mundane and human for expressing sentiments. Margi music is based on Samayoga.

Samagana: The important ganas are Gayatra, Agneya, Hindra, Pavamana, Arka, Dhanva, Vrataparvas, Sukriya, Vamadevya, Brihat, Agnishtomi, Yagnayagya. These names are related to metre, Ribhi, Deity and yaga etc. Most of Rks of Sama are in the Gayatri metre.

The Chandogya Upanishat describes the method of singing Vdganas, Svayas and different Samas. Omkara is the Soul and the most important Vdgana. Therefore -

ॐ नित्यं तदक्षरमुदीतमुपासीत - Om which is essence of Vdgita should be meditated, because the Vdgata begins his singing with Omkara. Om is not only the symbol of Paramatma, but also the nearest to Him.

Being the name and symbol, it is the best means of meditating on God.

The parts of the Sama are known as Bhaktis. As the Vdgata does the Vdgana with Om, Omkara has because Vdgita, because

"फ रुषस्य वक् रसः, वाचः जेक् रसः, क्रुचः साम रसः, सामा उद्गीती रसः॥ (Ch. Up. 1-1-4). (Explained already).

The Upanishat goes a step further and says - स एषा रसानां रसतमः - This is the best of rasas.

Rasa is the essence and base as well. The letters of the Vdgita should be meditated as Ut - geeta - Prana is Ut, Vak is Gee, Anna or Cause is अ. Hence, every Sama is begun with Omkara.

When a text is sung or treated to a melody, naturally, it undergoes modifications. These changes are known as Sama Vikaras. The more elaborate the music, the more

the more distorted and sometimes un-recognisable as the words become. In between the broken ~~parts~~ words ga rik, new words are formed by the Svaras used. In Samagana a, e, o, au, ha, vha, tayo, hup, hup etc are used. It may be remembered that in our classical music, familiar syllables such as a, o, ta, na, te, tanari, kadari etc, are used. In some Samat, ~~with~~ of the text only Bhakara is used. This is known as Bhakara Sama. These words and sounds have no particular literary significance. These are called Stobhas (स्तोभ), which have become inseparable parts of Samagana. Rks undergo six kinds of V: kara or Change: -

- (1) V: kara: Changes in the letters of the Rig Vedic words in the Samavayi setting
 ex. अग्न्यायि वीतये -
 Agne becomes Ognayi
- (2) Vishleshana: The Vowels of the word of the Rik become lengthened and broken.
 eg: वीतये becomes Oyi to yayi -
- (3) V: karshana: The Vowels become lengthened as above eg. ye becomes yaay -
- (4) Abhyasa: Repetition. Singing twice or thrice the same letters.
 eg: Nrimnāyi Nrimnam (3) etc.
- (5) Virama: pause. Singing part of a word after a pause. eg: Grinānohavya dataye is sung as Grinānoha | Vyadā to yayi.
- (6) Stobha: Introduction of exclamatory words in the midst of a song: -
 eg: auhoVa, haKuvā, Oyida, Himnā etc

स्तोमस्य कक्षणं नास्ति किं व्याप्ति न विवर्णता।
आविलम्बमस्ति व्याप्तं विशिष्टं कक्षणं भवेत् ॥

(Taimineeya Nyayamala).

All these modifications are used to enhance the melody. So, they are known as Stobhas. Stobhas are of two kinds.

- (1) Vatsa Stobha: This is also known as Sāsthaka Stobha. It has a definite fixed meaning. It is laid down that particular Stobhas to be sung in particular Samas.
- (2) Paśa Stobhas: There are 13 Stobhas such as hāve, hāye, āthā, yihā, yeevoo, ye', aauhoyi, himon, Svare, yā, Vrat and hum (Ch V-1-13-1). Though there is no particular meaning, they indicate some meaning connected with the Devata. eg: Vookara is Aditya, himkara is Prajapati, ya is Anna, sha is Atma etc., Paśa Stobha being the soul of Asariragana. Thus, Paśa Stobhas have gained importance. It may be remembered that ye, tanasi, tadarnia, lom etc, are used in music today to create force and aesthetic beauty in singing Ragas or melodies.

मयि अक्षरं सामगीयते - Says the Chandogya. Rks are the Sahitya or literary words of Samagana. To facilitate singing by splitting the words and adding here and there, new letters, Sama is sung. The main aim here is the music of Samagana. Here, the rules of metre and grammar are not applicable. If the words are split and repeated, it should not be considered as an error - Says Kallinatha, in his Commentary on the 'Sangita Ratnaka' of Saranga Deva.

"सामवेदप्रकृतिके संगीत ज्ञानवशात्
व्यक्तं पदानां पुनरुक्तिरर्थोक्तिश्च न
वाप्येति मन्तव्यम्।"

It is a well-known fact that in our classical music, the Sahitya becomes almost unrecognisable. Sometimes, particularly when the singing is elaborate, a class of listeners and critics keep on stressing the importance of Sahitya. This, often becomes almost impossible as this is natural and inevitable as could be seen from Samaveda. But this does not necessarily mean that the singer has the license to split the Sahitya as he pleases.

The Riks of Sama have been classified into Samhita and gāna. Samhita is again classified into parvarchika and Uthararchika. The second part of parvarchika is called Aranyaka Samhita. Samagana has been classified into Gramageya and Aranya-geya, ooha and oohyagana. parvarchika Samas were dedicated to praising deities Agni, Indra, parjanya etc. The direct use of Dharma can be seen in singing about Village deities in the Gramageya, which was sung publicly by all communities. The ragas of this Geya are ooha ragas.

The Sama singers used to sing using Vedic musical instrument, the Veena. Vedic literature mentions different types of Veena.

This is like the modern Bhajans, Samkirtan etc.

The Riks of the second part of parvarchika were meant for singing privately in forest regions, in a peaceful environment. It is

that these have sanctity and lustre. This singing may not be pleasing to the Common people. Here, the singing is without any ~~improvements~~. It is *Oohyagana*. *Oohya* means to sing new things what was ~~not~~ earlier. (*अथर्ववेद - अथर्व - अथर्व*).

Based on Patanjali's statement - *Sahasra Vartmaa Samavadah* - we can say that there was singing in different styles according to *manodharma* or mental disposition. In *oohyagana* both *Prakriti* and *Vikriti* *Swaras* were used. This is like the modern *manodharma* music.

The same Rik was sung in an easier manner and also in a learned manner according to the circumstances. This may be compared to the modern practice of singing the same song in a simple manner and also in a superior manner with *Sangatis* and *gamakas*.

In yagnas the *Udgatras* used to sing 2-7 Riks in one *Raga*. This was helpful to those to learn Sama singing. In *Utharanchika* the ~~stotra~~ Riks belonging to the *Stotras* or Riks were sung in the same *Raga*. In modern times the notation for *Pallavi*, *anupallavi* and the first *Charana* are given and then only the words or literary part given. *Charanas* are given with a note - it is like the above *Charanas*. This system's origin may be traced to the above system of *Samagana*.

In sacrifices or yagnas etc., the Sama singers used to sing using the Vedic musical instrument, the *Veena*. Vedic literature mentions different types of *Veena*. Among the oldest is the *Ekatantri Veena*.

They believed that this was very helpful for the upasana of Omkara or Pranava. The Vdgatri would play on the Ansumbara Veena (अंशुमरवेणु) in the beginning. To sing the Svaras in the upper and lower octaves, the DVitantri, Tritantri, Chatustantri, the Saptatantri or Chitra Veenas came to be used in course of time. From the point of entertainment of the people, the number of strings increased and the Satatantri or Katyagani Veena came into use. For Veeri singing the Chatustantri and Chitra Veenas and for singing Slokas of poetical works and poetry or Vakhyagana, the 9 stringed Vipanchi Veena, 21 stringed Veena and Kokile and other types of Vakhyagana Veenas, for laukika gana, Veenas having many strings called Laukika Veenas became classified.

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Vyakhyagana is the origin of modern Gramaka Vachana. All these Veenas were without steps. Along with Samagana other instruments like Veena, Venu, mridanga, Panara, pushkara, Bhaanra were also used depending on the necessity.

The main Sama Singer had many assistants to sing with him. The Chandogyopnishat describes the composition of gana and gives its five components. They are Prastava, Vdgita, pratihara, Upadrava and Nishana. These are called Bhaktis. To begin the Rik with Omkara is Prastava. The singer of this part is called Prastota. Then the Vdgitha sing the Vdgita portion of Sama, which is the most important part of Sama. Vdgita means to sing in the upper Svaras. The

The third singer takes up the last word of the Udgita and sings the Pratihara portion. After the Upasava, all the three Ritviks jointly sing the Concluding portion or Nishana along with omkara and thus conclude the singing. Here, the singing the Eka Svara is gradually brought down the lower base and concludes. This is called Nishana. Hainkara is the basic pitch. Hainkara is equal to Hainkara. Thus, Samavaya is rendered in the ascending order upto the Udgita and then the avarohana order - the descending order. This system was in vogue till the 11-12 centuries. This system is followed in the modern system of music as well. The order of Composition such as Udgita, antara, abhoga has followed the order of Samavaya Composition.

In the Sacrifices, the group of Udgatris such as Udgatr, Prastota, Pratihara and Subrahmanya used to sing each part separately and in conclusion sang the Nishana together. This Chorus singing is seen in modern music, especially in folk music.

The Chandogya Upanishat says that the basis of Sama is Svara and the basis of Svara is Prana. Samika means a group of three notes (ga ri sa). The Svarantara Ni was added to this and sung. Modern and western scholars have conducted studies and research regarding this aspect. According to them music of the Samavaya is in the descending order. It resembles the pentatonic Raga Abhogi (Sa ri ga ma da Sa) - Sa da ma ga ri sa. In course of time seven notes came to be used.

Lake on the Kharaharapriya Scale or mela came into vogue. Till the time of Samgasera (13th cent) this was considered as pure Scale. The Svaras of Samaveta have been adjusted in the three octaves - manora, moohya and taara. This is found in every school of Samaveta. The flute has played an important role in determining the Svaras of Samaveta. They are - na ga ri sa ni da pa. (मः सामगानो प्रथमः स वेणो मल्लिम स्वरः ॥ (Maraoriya Sikkha). This is in the descending order.

Generally, Samas are in 5 notes. The Kaulthuma branch has seven notes. The Srutis (microtone) of all these have been recognized. The Mahabhashya says that there were many branches of Samaveta. But in course of time all of them have gone into oblivion. The ancient texts mention 13 Samagacharyas and ten Pravachanakaras. But, now, we have only three schools - Jaiminiya, Kaulthuma and Ranayaniga. The Ranayaniga school is found in Tamil Nad's Kanchipuram - Valambur, Kumbhakonam, Mysore, Bangalore, Gokarna and Udupi of Karnataka, Jagapur and Mallur of Uttar Pradesh, Kaulthuma in Gujarat, Tamil Nad, U.P. and parts of Karnataka, and Jaiminiya or Talavakaras are found in Tamil Nad and Kerala.

The Samagana Scale is generally pentatonic. This is found in folk music and music of ancient Greece. The Svaras are called Yama in Samavadi parlance. The Samavadi notes are Kruttha (Madhyama), Prathama (Gaandhara), Dvitiya (Rishabha), Tritiya (Shadja), Chaturtha (Nishada), Manora (Dhaivata) and Ati Dvarya (Panchama).

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In some Samaganas the Kampama
of the Samavoeic Svara are found.
The definition of Gramaka - खरख
कंपी समकः - being so, it may be said
to be the origin gamakas (embellishment-
vibration) in music.

Notation: The Samavoeic notation is
numerical. The numerals 1, 2, 3 etc., are
given on the top of the words of the Song
or letters of the Song to indicate their notes.
The following numerals indicate the
notes: -

ni¹ ga² ru³ sa⁴ ni⁵ dha⁶ pa⁷

The numeral which is on the top of the first
letter of a Samavoeic Song becomes the
key-note of that Song. For instance, if the
Sama begins with the numeral 2, then the
Gaandhara Svara becomes the keynote of that
particular Song; if it begins with the numeral
on it, then Rishabha is the keynote of that
Song. If there are two numerals on the top
of a letter, that particular letter or syllable
will be sung in two notes. If the syllable
'ra' is on the top of a letter of the hymn, it
means deergha svara or elongated note and
the same Svara will be sung in two
matras (unit of time measure in a talas).
eg: Hau is to be sung as Sa-Sa.

If there is an avagraha after a
particular letter, it means that the letter
has two matras. The Sama Singer uses
his right-hand palm as a means of reference
for the notation of various Songs. The middle

line of the thumb indicates the figure 1 or the note Maadhyama; the middle line of the forefinger indicates 2 or the note Gaandhara; the middle line of the middle finger indicates 3 or the note Rishabha; the middle line of the ring-finger indicates 4 or the note Shadja; the middle line of the little finger indicates 6 or the note Dhairvati; and the tip of the thumb indicates 7 or the note Panchama. By this method the Sama Singer easily remembers the entire notation of each Sama, whenever he sings. Hence, the palm of the right hand is called Gaatra Veena or the Body Veena. This method of Samagana notation is the origin of modern notation.

Tala or time measure was not used in Sama. But Rhythm in Sama is expressed by the Chandas or metre of the hymn. Most of the Samas are in the Gayatri metre, some in Anushtup and Jagati metre. The metre is decided by the number of letters. If there are 24 letters it is Gayatri metre. In actual singing of the hymn, the rhythm was determined by matras - Hrasva or Short Vowel (one matra), digha or long Vowel (two matras), and pluta or prolated is of three matras. The avantara Svaras had separate notation. The time measure or rhythm was shown in two ways - Sa Sabda Kriza - by clapping and Nissabda Kriza - by silent movement of the hand. In course of time, this gave rise to the Tala System.

Moreover, each Sama begins with a different keynote. This gave rise to Shifting Scales of Various sorts and formed a Murchana System. (new Scales obtained by Shifting the Key note in a Scale), which in course of time, became the basis of Jati; the basis of Raga. Svaras are Seven, Gramas are three, murchanas are twentyone, Tanas are fiftyone; thus, is the Svara mandala - Says the Narayana Sikkha.

(सप्तस्वराः त्रयोऽष्टाः मूर्च्छनास्वेक विंशतिः।)

(तानापुकोन पंचादशित्वेव स्वरमंडलम् ॥)

Gana Kala or time of Singing

The ancient Rishis, keeping in view the temperature, the atmosphere, the benefic and malefic effects on our body and nervous system, have classified the Samas accordingly; when singing would be free from blemish and beneficial. As such, some Samas like Bahishpavamana Stotras should be sung in the morning; some in the early hours, some in the afternoon, some in the evening and some in the night.

The Tanseni Brahmana gives details about this classification.

It is notable that this system came into vogue in music also. eg. early morning ragas — Bhupali, Bhairavi, Malayamaruta etc; morning ragas — Bilahari, Dhanyasi,

Kedaragaula etc; evening ragas; — Vasant, Nata Kururaji, Poorvi Kalyani etc; All nine ragas — Bhairavi, Sankarabharana, Kalyani, Arabhi etc.

Long Compositions; The Sama Veda has some long Compositions. Some of them require 30 minutes. eg: Raja Sama, Maha Vaidyaanara Sama, Kasyapa pucchha Sama etc. Some groups of Samas require more time to sing. To sing some of them in detail and in groups require 2-3 hours.

In Karnatic music also, there are long compositions. eg. Purandara Dasa's Suladis, Ramaswamy Dikshitar's 108 Raga Tala malika, Maha Vaidyanatha Dyer's 72 Maha Raga malika. These require more than 2 hours to sing. Other examples of long Compositions are Muthuswamy Dikshitar's Chalantasa Ragamalika, Nateshvara Ragamalika of 27 Ragas. Here also, the influence of Sama Veda can be noticed.

In order to obtain Rasa, all Svaras should be pronounced clearly and loudly, without swallowing or mumbling or throwing out some Varnas. The Svaras should be pronounced clearly without mixing. This shows that obtaining Gana Rasa was considered important. This undoubtedly paves the way for Rasa Veda in music.

The Chandogya has laid down how the Sama Upasaka should be careful in singing; how important it is for the Upasaka and Sama to become one; how to utter the Svaras; how good singing bestows longevity; how he lives a shining life and how he becomes famous as a great Soul.

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The origin of the subject gomerits and demerits of the Surger can be seen here. Several applications or Prayogas of Sama Veda for obtaining health, longevity, curing diseases and fear have been dealt with in the Sama Vihana Brahmana.

The rhythmic waves of music, have the potential to envelop the universe, as they constitute the Nada Brahma. Its effect is long standing. It acts on the nervous system and is capable of special results. The ancients who knew the potentiality of Samagana, used it as Sammohana Vidyā. There have been instances of using Sama Veda for realising several desires.

In music we have instances of Raga Megha malhar and Amrita Varshini for rain, Deepaka Raga for lighting, Bilahari for saving a man from death and how these were used by Tansen, Mullu Shwamy Dikshitar and Sarguru Tyagaraja. The latest is that of Bidaram Krishnappa, a prominent musician of Mysore Royal Court of yester years. One Alwar Chettiar had lost his mental balance and Bidaram Krishnappa sang before him for 15 days as a result of which the Chettiar became mentally normal.

To summarise, Margi music which was a part of Vedic rituals and practices, developed within the compass of Vedic rules. It was influenced by Devi music and thus laukika music developed according to the needs of Manoranjana. The Vedic

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Riks reflect the desires of all classes. Prof. A. Hillebrandt says "the hymns did reflect the opinions, not only of the higher, but also of the lower classes and the popular traditions of different ages". We can undoubtedly conclude that the origin of Pallavi, arupallavi, Charana, their system of notation, Gamaka Vaachana, group singing, Tala system, manodharini music, the concept of avarta (आवर्त), Vilamba or slow tempo, Counting, murchana, Tatis and Ragas, dhvani and Rasa Vileka, Components of music and other subjects, which have developed during the course of centuries, in the Sama Veda. Hence, that every book on music and musicology quotes Yagyavalkya's Couplet —

सामवेदादिदे गीतम् संजग्राह पितमहः ॥
 and Sarguru Vyagaraja has sung — सामनिगमन सुधामयगान' in his Composition सामनवर्गमन (Hindola).
The music of the Divya Prabandhas.

In the Sri Vaishnava tradition, Alwars are the fore-runners followed by the Acharyas. Sri Nathamuni was indeed a link as it were, between the Alwars and the Acharyas. The Sri Vaishnavas remember him even today, while they start chanting the Nalayira (4000) Divya Prabandhas thus: —

कृष्णिनाथे सद्यरेमां नाथगामुन मध्वनाम् ।
 अस्मदानार्य पर्यन्ता वन्दे गुरुपरंपराम् ॥

When the devotional songs rendered by the great Alwars were almost extinct, it was

Nathamuni, who compiled them and took pains to put them in order and named them as Dravida Veda. (Nathamuni was born in Visanarayana-peram - now Kallur Mammur Koil, a township 15 miles away from Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu.)

He lived between 823-924 AD. He was a great Scholar in Sanskrit and many Sastras and a yogi. He revived the festival called Tiru Vachayanaotsava - festival of recitation of Divya Prabandhas, which had stopped after the time of Tirumangai Alvar. He set them to music and revived their singing along with the Vedic recitation. He also organised a special kind of dance called Araiyar Sava and made arrangement to carry on the same in the Sridaigam and other Vishnu temple. The Sri Vaishnavas considered the Divya Prabandhas equal to Sanskrit Veda and this has continued from the 9th century onwards and so, they are being respected as Ubhaya Vantas.

The compositions of the Alvars have much musical value. This was noticed and understood by the scholars through the services of Nathamuni. He is regarded as the first Acharya in Sri Vaishnava tradition. These Prabandhas were being in ancient Tamil ragas or forms. But in course of time the practice of singing them has disappeared in course of time. Now they are recited. Even the pronunciation of words is not clear. Each person recites in his own way according to his voice.

The Alvars were contemporaries of some Saiva Nayanars. whose outpourings are known as Tiru Vembavai, Tiru Vecha Kam,

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Tiruppugal, Tevaram etc. played a major role in the Bhakti Movement and revived Hinduism in the Middle Ages. This period has been rightly termed as Isai-pattu Music's golden Age.

It is known that the Alvar's Prabandhas were sung in pleasant ragas. Now, we have to find out the ragas of these Prabandhas. Of the 103 pams of ancient Tamil music, about 28 pams have been recognised, with the help of the pams of Tevaram. In course of time, the names of the pams have changed into the names of ragas. Only 24 pams have been surviving. In those days pams were classified into day ragas, night ragas and all-time ragas. The Tevaram and Divya Prabandhas served as the source of inspiration for the fertile growth of folk songs called Siddhar Paadal.

Tevarams have what is known as Kattalal (கட்டல்). Similarly Prabandhas have ottas. (ஓட்ட). This indicates the rhythm of the song. Based on the patti Isai, it is possible to throw light on the music of the Prabandhas. Tevarams are sung generally in aadi, tripata and rupaka talas. Time-measures at present. By following the metre of the Prabandhas, they can be sung at set to these talas. The late Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, the folk star of Karnataka music, set the 30 pasurams of the Tiruppavai to delectable ragas and used to sing one pasuram invariably in every one of his concerts. Similarly, another great musician of yesteryears, late T.K. Rangachariar set some of the pasurams of the Alvars to music and sang them in his concerts and popularised them.

In the 18th century Guruswamy Debikan of

of Tiruvannam being a musician, derives the practice of singing Tevarams in Siva temples. Before these became extinct, following the old path or tradition, Tamil Sai Sangham of Chennai, has attempted its revival from 1949 and this has begun to pay rich results.

As stated earlier, Tevarams and Prabandhas were sung in pans. Though there have been 103 pans, only 24 of them have been used. Similar to these, the identical present day ragas are — Ganakaram — Gayakapruga, Indalam — Lalitapanchamam (Mayamalavagowla), pancham — Aahira, Seekamaram — Naananama kruga, Kuruji — Malahari, Vyala Kuruji — Saurashtra, Kaubikam — Bhairavi, Serooruti — Madhyamavati, Nattappasai — Nata Kuruji, Takkebi — Kaumbhoji, Serraji — Yashukula Kaumbhoji, Panjaram — Kedaragowla, Koli — Sindhukarnasa, Payamtakka — Suddha Saveri, Megharaga Kuruji — Neelambari, Payam Panjula — Sankarabharana, Sadari — pantuvarali, Tiruttanzakam — Begase, Kaantaaram — Navaraj, Anjalakuruji — Sailadesakshi, puranemai — Sreekanthi etc.

The system of singing the Divya Prabandha established by Nathamuni is now extinct. It is very difficult to know in which ragas they used to sing. Just as the singing of Tevarams has been revived, there is the need to do research and launch a movement of singing the Prabandhas as they were sung previously. Sri Rama Bharati has sung some pasurams and ~~they~~ ^{the} are available. Cassettes are available. In the Sanskrit Research Academy of Melukote, a 500 year old manuscript of pasurams

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has come to light. It has the names of
the ragas and ottas. Research has been
going on in this regard. It will help us
to know in what ragas these Prabandhams
used to be sung 500 or more years ago.
This discovery and research will pave the
way for not only reviving, but also
bringing the Prabandhams in a better
and attractive manner.

समस्वर्गः समस्तैर्गो जगद्वैतत नराचरम् ।
सेज्जीवयति निश्वात्मा सनी विष्णुः प्रसीदतु ॥

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21-7-23

by Dr V.S. Sampath kumaracharya

THE INFLUENCE OF SAMAVEDA ON MUSIC

सामजाकत जलाकीर्णम् छन्दःकल्लोल संकक्रमम् ।

तंत्राहान्वितम् वन्दे सामवेदमहार्णवम् ॥

Music can be defined as a special kind of sound or Vidya, which brings us immense joy. Samyak Gcetam Sangeetam is its simple definition. Music which has evolved in India that is Bharat, and imbibed the atmosphere and spirit of spiritual India is known as Bharatceya Sangita or Indian Music. It has a special character of its own. It differs from the music of other countries. Though it is influenced by foreign music and cultures, it has preserved its own quality and nature. It has absorbed foreign materials in an unifying method (Swami Prajnanananda). Its sweet soothing sounds touch the heart, creating an inexpressible aesthetic feeling, bringing permanent peace and solace to the human mind.

Music has seven notes – Sa re ga ma pa da ni. If these are combined to form a compound word it becomes – Sarigamapadani. This word is formed by three words – Sari, gama and padani. Sari in Sanskrit means a boat (that which moves in water without impediments); gama means to enable or make it available; pada means position and ni means to give. It means the boat which enables us to cross the ocean of samsara and the path to realise God.

Musicologists are of the opinion that the music of nations of the world has its root in the supreme sound known as sphota or Sabda Brahman. According to the Mahabhashya, the casual sound gives with to speech and music. Music manifests in two ways – Aahata and anaahata – the manifested and unmanifested. Aahata Nada is caused by the friction of Vital air (Prana) with heat-energy (agni); sound generates and manifests. This is called Nada; God is Nada Brahman. It can be said that music is the gift of nature to man.

Our Sastras have termed music as Gandharva Veda. This is a subsidiary Veda of Samaveda. Our ancient forefathers have shown different paths to realise God. Music is one of them. This path is known as Sangitopasana, as stated by Madhusudana Sarasvati in his 'Advaita Siddhi'. In the life of man, happiness and sorrow will not be in equal measure. Generally, sorrow is in greater proportion. Music is the most important means to get freed from worldly sorrows and worries. Saga Vidyananya (14th cent.) has described the aim and greatness of music in the following Verse:

संसारदुःख दंगानाम् उत्तमानामनुग्रहात् ।

प्रभुणा शंकरेणात्र गीतविध्याप्रकाशिता ॥

"Music has been gifted by God Sankara to emancipate the good from the sufferings and sorrows of Samsara. To cross the ocean of Samsara and easily realise God, is the aim of music" says Saint Tyagaraja (बागुग भवसागरमुननु दरिप) in his Athama raga composition 'भजनत्रेभराद'.

Veda: The word Veda is derived from the root Vid-Vid gyane; Vedayati means to give knowledge and hence, the Veda has received the highest recognition. The word Vid indicates three ideas – 1) to be or exist – Sat, (2) to know-chit (3) to receive or get i.e. Rasa or Ananda and Veda suggests Sachitananda. Veda means knowledge and this knowledge is spiritual. As it expounds supra sensual subject, it is Veda of the four purusharthas or goals of life, artha – wealth and kama desires can be understood and realised by worldly affairs. But for the knowledge of Dharma and Moksha righteousness and salvation, knowledge of the Vedas is necessary. As logic is unlimited, the apaurusha Veda Vidya is means to realisation – says

Adi Sankaracharya. Though it is accepted as the word of God through the Sages and though it has used many words related to the material world, the Veda is the embodiment of the All-Knowing.

Though Veda is one for purposes of application, it has been divided by Maharshi Veda Vyasa into Rg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda - Rg Veda for the attainment of knowledge. Yajur Veda for yagnas or Sacrifices, Sama Veda for music and Atharva for material progress. The Taithriya Brahmana says that Sama refers to the Tejas – effulgence, aspect of Brahman (सर्वतेजः सामरूप्यं शाश्वतं). Hence, Lord Krishna has said that He is the Sama Veda (वेदानाम् साम वेदोऽस्मि). In addition to the Vedas, several Srutis, Smritis, Prasnoparishat, Manusmriti, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Srimad Bhagavata and the Puranas contain praises about the greatness of Sama Veda.

वाचः ऋचः सामरसः साग्र उर्दीभोरसः (ch.U.) – the speech organ is the essence of the organs of the human being. RK is pronounced by this organ and hence, RK is the essence of the speech organ; Sama gives ananda or joy and hence it is the essence of RK; Udgitha is the part of Sama and it is Onkara which encompasses all sounds and Udgitha is the essence of Sama and worthy of meditation like the Lord.

Sama means tranquillity. It endows peace to us who suffer in the mundane life. This is the highest aim of Sama Veda. It is the auspicious music of victory achieved by our Vedic Rishis. To inherent divinity has the power to bestow peace and joy to humanity. Hence, Sama Veda is set to be the essence of all the Vedas (सर्वेषां वा एष वेदानां रसो यत्सामः । Satapatha) it has given a divine sound to all the matras.

Every Veda according to recension has Brahmanas and other texts attached to it. The texts related to Sama Veda are:

- (1) Brahmana: Taandi. Shadvinsa. Devatashyaya. Sama vidhana. Arshya, Chandogya Vamsa, Samhitapanishat.
- (2) Chandogya, Kena – Upanishats
- (3) Sruta Sutra: Latyayana, Drahyayana, Jaiminiya
- (4) Grihya Sutra: Khadira, Gobhila

According to Upanishads, Sama means Sing. Sa means RK or word, ana means Svara or Vital air or Prana. When Sa and Ma mingle, it becomes Sama (सा नाम ऋक् आम नाम स्वरः ऋक् स्वरयोः संयोगात् साम शब्दो निष्पन्नः (ch.up)) Mere Rik or Svara cannot be Sama. These are mutually dependent. When they mingle, they become Sama. (ऋष्वे माता, साम पिता - ch.up) To develop from the known Svaras is the refuge of Sama. (का साम गतिरक्षयः परायण इत्येतत् | ch.up) – 'विनिर्दि साम्नोः वृष्णिः' the upasana of Samagana which is pleasant, soft, melodious, majestic and benefic having special notes should be done. The Jaimuniya Sukta has emphasised that the soul of Sama Veda is music – 'गीतीषु सामारव्या'

Sama Veda is the Veda ready to be sung by the udgana. Among its 2639 mantras, except for 75 ones. The others are Rig Vedic Riks. These Riks are part of the Sakala Samhita. The other 75 must have belonged to the Baskala Samhita, which is not available. Rig Veda is the maatu (मातृ) and Sama Veda is the Dhatu (धातृ).

It is usual to classify music into two types – Margi (मार्गी) and Desi (देसी). Matanga, in his ‘brihaddesi’ says that to expound the raga according to the process laid down in definite situations is Margi music. Dasi music means the music of the regions. It is lankika or mundane and human for expressing sentiments. Margi music is based on Sama Veda.

Samagana: The important ganas are Gayatra, Agneya, Aindra, Pavamana. Arka, Dvanda, Vrataparvas, Sukriya, Vamadevya, Brihat, Agnishtomi, Yagnoyagniya. These names are related to metre, Rishi, Deity and Yaga etc. Most of RKs of Sama are in the Gayatri metre.

The chandogya upanishat describes the method of singing udganas, svaras and different Samas. Omkara is the soul and the most important Udgana. Therefore – (ओमित्ये तदक्षरमुद्गीतमुपासीत) – Om which is essence of Udgita should be meditated, because the Udgath begins his singing with Omkara. Om is not only the symbol of ‘Paramatma’ but also nearest to him. Being the name and symbol, it is the best means of meditating on God.

The parts of the Sama are known as Bhaktis. As the Udgata does the Udgana with Om, Omkara has because Udgita, because “पुरुषस्य वाक् रसाः, वाचः ऋक् रसः, ऋचः साम रसः, सामा उद्गीतो रसः ॥” (ch. Up. 1-1-4) (explained already). The upanishat goes a step further and says - स एषा रसानां रसतमः – this is the best of rasas. Rasa is the essence and has as well. The letters of the Udgita should be meditation as Ut geeta – Prana is Ut, Vak is gee, anna or cause is थ. Hence, every Sama is begun with Omkara.

When a text is sung or treated to a melody, naturally, it undergoes modifications. These changes are known as Sama Vikaras. The more elaborate the music, the more distorted and sometimes unrecognisable do the words become. In between the broken words of a Rik, new words are formed by the Svaras used. In Samagana a,e,o,au,ha, uha,tayo, hus, hup etc. are used. It may be remembered that in our classical music, familiar syllables such as a, l,o,ta,na, ti, tanari, tadari etc. are used. In some Samas instead of the text only Bhakara is used. This is known as Bhakarasama. These words are sounds have no particular literary significance. These are called Stobhas (स्तोभ), which have become inseparable parts of Samagana. RKs undergo six kinds of Vikara or change:

- (1) Vikara – Changes in the letters of the Rig Vedic words in the Sama Vedic setting. Ex. अञ् आयथि वीतये Agna becomes Ognayi
- (2) Visleshana – The vowels of the word of the Rik become lengthened and broken. Ex. वीतये becomes Oyi toyayi
- (3) Vikarshana – The vowels become lengthen as above. Ex. Ye becomes Yaayi
- (4) Ahhyasa – Repetition. Singing twice or thrice the same letters. Ex. Nrimnayi Nrimnam (3) etc.
- (5) Virama – Pause. Singing part of a word after a pause. Ex. Grina no havvyadataye is sung as Grinanoha | Vyadatoyayi
- (6) Stobha – Introduction of exclamatory words in the midst of a song. Ex. Auhova, havuva, oyida, Himma etc.

~~Up to sent to ANM for correction~~

स्तौमस्य लक्षणं नास्ति किंव्यस्ति न विवर्णता ।
आदित्यमप्सतिव्याप्तं विशिष्टं कक्षणं भवेत् ॥

(Jainiceya Nyayamala)

All these modifications are used to enhance the melody. So, they are known as Stobhas.

Stobhas are of two kinds

- (1) Vatsa Stobha: This is also known as Saithaka Stobha. It has a definite fixed meaning. It is laid down that particular stobhas to be sung in particular samas.
- (2) Pada Stobhas: These are 13 Stobhas such as hāvu, hāyi, atha, yihā, yeevoo, ye, aauhoyi, himm, svare, yā, virat and hum (ch. U-1-13-1). Though there is no particular meaning, they indicate some meaning connected with the Devata. Ex. Vookara is Aditya, him kara is Prajapati, ya is Anna, Tha is Atma etc., Pada stobha being the soul of Asariragana,. Thus. Pada stobhas have gained importance.

It may be remembered that ye, tanari, tadarina, tom etc. are used in music to-day to create force and aesthetic beauty in singing ragas of melodies.

ऋचि अछूदं सामगीयते - Says the Chandogya. RKs are the Sahitya or literary words of Samagana. To facilitate singing by splitting the words and adding here and there, new letters, Sama is sung. The main aim here is the music of Samagana. Here, the rules of metre and grammar are not applicable. If the words are split and repeated, it should not be considered as an error – says Kalhinatha, in his commentary on the 'Sangita Ratnaka' of Sarangadeva

"सामवेदप्रकृतिके संगीत गानवशात्

कदाचित् पदानां पुनरुक्तिरर्धोकिञ्च न दाषाएति मन्तव्यम्"

It is a well-known fact that in our classical music, the Shitya becomes almost unrecognisable sometimes, particularly when the singing is elaborate. A class of listeners and critics keep on stressing the importance of Sahitya. This often becomes almost impossible as this is natural and inevitable as could be seen from Sama Veda. But this does not necessarily mean that the singer has the license to split the Sahitya as he pleases.

The RKs of Sama, have been classified into Samhita and gāna. Samhita is again classified into Parvachika and Uttararchika. The second part of Parvachika is called Āranya Ka Samhita. Samagana has been classified into Gramageya and Aranya-geya, Ooha and Oohyagana. Parvachika Samas were dedicated to presiding deities Agni, Indra, Pavamana etc. The direct use of Dharma can be seen in singing about village deities in the Gramageya, which was sung publicly by all communities. The ragas of this Geya are Ooha ragas.

The Riks of the second part of Purvachika were meant for singing privately in forest regions, in a peaceful environment. It is that these have sanctity and lustre. This singing may not be pleasing to the common people. Here, the singing is without any impediments. It is Oohyagana. Oohya means to singing new things what was earlier. (अपूर्वोत् क्षेपणं - जैमिनि)

Based on Patanjali's statement – Sahasra Vartmaa Samavedah – we can say that there was singing in different styles according to manodharma or mental disposition. In Oohya gana both Prakriti and Vikriti Svaras were used. This is like the modern manodharma music.

The same Rik was sung in an easier manner and also in a learned manner according to the circumstances. This may be compared to the modern practice of singing the same song in a simple manner and also in a superior manner with Sangatis and gamakas.

In yagnas the Udgatri used to sing 2-7 Riks in one raga. This was helpful to these to learn sama singing. In Uttararchika the Riks belonging to the Stotras or Riks Were sing in the same raga. In modern times the notation for pallavi, anupallavi and the first charana are given and only the words or literary part of other charanas are given with a note-it is like the above charanas. This system's origin may be traced to the above system of Samagana.

In sacrifices or yagnas etc. the Sama singers used to sing using the Vedic musical instrument, the Veena. Vedic literature mentions different types of Veena. Among the oldest is the Eka Tantri Vecna.

They believed that this was very helpful for the upasana of Omkara or Pranava. The Udgatri would play on the Aaadumbara Veena (ಅತ್ತಿಮರದ ವೀಣೆ) in the beginning. To sing the svaras in the upper and lower octaves, the Dvitantri, Tritantri, Chatustantri, the Saptatantri or Chitra Veenas came to be used in course of time from the point of entertainment of the people, the number of strings increased and the Satatantri or Katyayani Veena came into use for Vedic singing the Chatustantri and Chitra Veenas and for singing slokas of poetical works and poetry or Vakhyagana, the 6 stringed Vipanehi Veena, 21 stringed Veena and Kokila and other types of Vakhyagana Veenas, for laukika gana, Veenas having many strings called Laukika Veenas became classified.

Vyakhyagana is the origin of modern Gamaka Vaachana. All these Veenas were without steps. Along with Samagama other instruments like Veena, Venu, Mridanga, Panata, Pushkara, Bhaanda were also used depending on the necessity.

The main Sama Singer had many assistants to sing with him. The Chandogya Upanishat describes the composition of gana and gives its five components. They are Prastava, Udgita, Pratihāra, Upadrava and Nidhana. These are called Bhaktis. To begin the Rik with Omkara is Prastāva. The singer of this part is called Prastota. Then the Udgatha sings the Udgita portion of Sama, which is the most important part of Sama. Udgita means to sing in the Upper Svaras. The third singer takes up the last word of the Udgita and sings the Pratihāra portion. After the Upadrava, all the three Ritviks jointly sing the concluding portion or Nidhana along with Omkara and thus conclude the singing. Here, the singing the eka svara is gradually brought down the lower base and concluded. This is called Nidhana. Himkara is the basic pitch. Himkara is equal to Humkara. Thus, Samagama is rendered in the ascending order up to the Udgita and then the avarohana order – the descending order. This system was in vogue till the 11-12 entries. This system is followed in the modern system of music as well. The order of composition such as Udgrāha, antara, ābhoga has followed the order of Sama Veda composition.

In the sacrifices, the group of Udgatris such as Udgatri, Prastota, Pratihāra and Subrahmanya used to sing each part separately and in conclusion sang the Nidhana together. This chorus singing is seen in modern music, especially in folk music.

The Chandogya Upanishat says that the basic of Sama is Svara and the basis of Svara is Prana. Samika means a group of three notes (ga ri sa). The Svarantara Ni was added to this and sung, Indian and Western scholars have conducted studies and research regarding this aspect. According to them music of the Sama Veda is in the descending order. It resembled the Pentatonic raga Abhogi (Sa rig ga ma da sa – Sa da ma ga ri sa). In course of time seven notes came to be used. Later on the Kharahara Priya scale or mela came into vogue. Till the

time of Samgadeva (13th cent.) this was considered as Pure Scale. The Svaras of Sama Veda have been adjusted in the three octaves – memora, moohya and taara. This is focused in every school of Sama Veda. The flute has played an important role in determining the Svaras of Sama Veda. They are – ma ga ri sa ni da pa (यः सामगानां प्रथमः स वैणोर्मध्यम स्वरः ॥

Naradya Siksha). This is in the descending order.

Generally, Samas are in 5 notes. The Kanthuma branch has seven notes. The srutis (microtone) of all these have been recognised. The Mahabhashya says that there were many branches of Sama Veda. But in course of time all of them have gone into oblivion. The ancient texts mention 13 Samagacharyas and ten Pravachana Karas. But, now, we have only three schools – Jaimuniya, Kaunthuma and Ranayaniya. The Ranayaniya school is found in Tamil Nadu Kanchipuram – Valamboor, Kumbhakonam, Mysore, Bangalore, Gokarna and Udupi of Karnataka, Jayapur and Mathura of Uttar Pradesh. Kaunthuma in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, UP and parts of Karnataka, and Jaiminiyas or Talavakaras are found in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

The Samagana scale is generally pentatonic. This is found in folk music and music of ancient Greece. The Svaras are called yama in Sama Vedic Parlance. The Sama Veda notes are Krushtha (Madhyama) Prathama (Gandhara), Dvitiya (Rishabha), Tritiya (Shadja), Chaturtha (Nishada), Mandra (Dhaivata) and Atisvarya (Panchama).

In some Samaganas the Kanpana of the Sama Vedic Svaras are found. The definition of Gamaka - स्वरस्य कंपो गमकः । - being so, it may be said to be the origin of gamakas (embellishment - vibration) in music.

Notation: The Sama Vedic notation is numerical. The numerals 1,2,3 etc., are given on the top of the words of the song or letters of the song to indicate their notes. The following numerals indicate the notes:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
ma ga ri sa ni dha pa

The numeral which is on the top of the first letter of a Sama Vedic song becomes the key-note of that song. For instance, if the Sama begins with the numeral 2, then the Gandhara svara becomes the keynote of that particular song; if it begins with the numeral on it, then rishabha is the keynote of that song. If there are two numerals on the top of a letter, that particular letter or syllable will be sung in two notes. If syllable 'ra' is on the top of a letter of the hymn, it means deergha svara or elongated note and the same svara will be sung in two matras (unit of time measured in a tala). Ex. Hau is to be sung as Sa-Sa

If there is an avagraha after a particular letter, it means that the letter has two matras. The Sama singer uses his right-hand palm as a ready reference for the notation of various songs. The middle line of the thumb indicates the figure 1 or the note Madhyama; the middle line of the forefinger indicates 2 or the note Gandhara; the middle line of the middle finger indicates 3 or the note Rishabha; the middle line of the ring-finger indicates 4 or the note Shadja; the middle line of the little finger indicates 6 or the note Dhaivata; the tip of the thumb indicates 7 or the note Panchama. By this method the Sama singer easily remembers the entire notation of each Sama, whenever he sings. Hence, the palm of the right hand is called Gaatra Veena or the Body Veena. This method of Samagana notation is the origin of modern notation.

Tala or Time measure was not used in Sama. But rhythm in Sama is expressed by the Chandas or metre of the hymn. Most of the Samas are in the Gayatri metre, some in Anushtup and Jagati metre. The metre is decided by the number of letters. If these are 24

letters it is Gayatri metre. In actual singing of the hymn, the rhythm was determined by matras – Hrasva or short vowel (one matra), deergha or long vowel (two matras) and pluta or prorated is of three matras. The avantara svaras had separate notation. The time-measure or rhythm was shown in two ways – Sa Sabda Kriya – by clapping and nissabda kriya - by silent movement of the hand. In course of time, this gave rise to the tala system.

Moreover, each Sama begins with a different keynote. This gave rise to shifting scales of various sorts and formed a Murchana System (new scales obtained by shifting the key note in a scale), which in course of time, became the basis of Jāti; the basis of raga. Svaras are seven, Gramas are three, Murchana System are twenty one, Tanas are fifty one; thus, is the Svara mandala says the Nararadiya Siksha.

(सप्तस्वराः त्रयोसामाः मूर्च्छनास्वेक विंशतिः ।

तानाएकोन पंचादतित्येव स्वरमंडलम् ॥)

Gana Kala or time of singing

The ancient Rishis, keeping in view the temperature, the atmosphere, the benefic and malefic effects on our body and nervous system, have classified the Samas accordingly, when singing would be free from blemish and beneficial. As such, some Samas like Bahish Pavamana Stotras should be sung in the morning; some in the early hours; some in the afternoon; some in the evening and some in the night. The tandi Brhmana gives details about this classification.

It is notable that this system came into Vogue in music also. Ex. *Early morning ragas* – Bhoopali, Bhauli, Malayamaruta etc.; *morning ragas* – Bilahari, Dhanyasi, Kedaradaula etc. *evening ragas* - Vasanta, Nata Kururanji, Poorvi Kalyani etc.; *All time ragas* – Bhairavi, Sankarabharana, Kalyani, Arabhi etc.

Long Compositions – The Sama Veda has some long compositions. Some of them require 30 minutes. Ex. Raja Sama, Maha Vaisvaanara Sama, Kasyapa Puccha Sama etc. Some groups of Samas require more time to sing. To sing some of them in detail and in groups require 2-3 hours.

In Karnatic music also, there are long compositions. Ex. Purandaradasa's Suladis, Ramaswamy Dikshitar's 108 Raga Tala Malika, Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer's 72 Mela Raga Malika. These require more than 2 hours to sing. Other examples of long compositions are Muthuswamy Dikshitar's Chaturdasa Ragamalika, Nakshatra Ragamalika of 27 rags. Here also, the influence of Sama Veda can be noticed.

In order to obtain Rasa, all svaras should be pronounced cleanly and loudly, without swallowing or numbling or throwing out some varnas. The svaras should be pronounced clearly without mixing. This shows that obtaining Gana Rasa was considered important. This undoubtedly paved the way for Rasa Viveka in music.

The Chandogya has laid down how the Sama Upasaka should be careful in singing; how important it is for the Upasaka and Sama to become one; how to differ the Svaras; how good singing bestows longevity; how he lives a shining life and how he becomes famous as a great soul.

The origin of the subject of merits and demerits of the singer can be seen here. Several applications or Prayogas of Sama Veda for obtaining health, longevity, curing diseases and fear have been dealt with in the Sama Vidhana Brahmana. The rhythmic waves of music, have the potential to envelop the universe, as they constitute the Nada Brahma. Its effect is

long standing. It acts on the nervous system and is capable of special results. The ancients who knew the potentiality of Samagana, used it as Sammohana Vidya. There have been instances of using Sana Veda for realising several desires.

In music we have instances of Raga Megha Malhar and Amrita Varshini for rain, Deepaka raga for lighting, Bilahari for saving a man from death and how these were used by Tansen, Multhu Swamy Dikshitar and Sadguru Tyagaraja. The latest is that of Bidaram Krishnappa a prominent musician of Mysore Royal Court of Yester Years, one Alvar Chettiar had lost his mental balance and Bidaram Krishnappa sang before him for 15 days as a result of which the Chettiar became mentally normal.

To summarise, Margi music which was a part of Vedic rituals and practices, developed within the compass of Vedic rules. It was influenced by Desi music and thus laukika music developed according to the needs of Manoranjana. The Vedic Riks reflect the desires of all classes. Prof. A Hillebrandt says "the hymns did reflect the opinions, not only of the higher, but also of the lower classes and the popular traditions of different ages". We can undoubtedly conclude that the origin of pallavi, anupallavi, charana, their system of notation, Gamaka Vaachana, group singing, Tala system, manodharina music, the concept of aavarta (आवर्त), Vilamba or slow tempo, counting, murchana, jātis and ragas, dhvani and Rasa Viveka, components of music and other subjects, which have developed during the course of centuries, in the Sama Veda. Hence, that every work on music and musicology quotes Yagyavalkya's couplet - सामवेदादिदं गीतम् संजग्राहू पितामहः ॥ and Sadguru Tyagaraja has sung - सामनिगमज सुधामयगान in his composition सामजवरगमन (Hindola).

The music of the Divya Prabandhas

In the Sri Vaishnava tradition, Alvars are the forerunners followed by the Acharyas. Sri Nathamuni was indeed a link as it were, between the Alvars and the Acharyas. The Srivaishnavas remember him even today, while they start chanting the Nalayira (4000) Divya Prabandhas thus:

लक्ष्मीनाथ समारंभां नाचयामुन मध्यमाम् ।

अस्मदाचार्य पर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरुपरंपराम् ॥

When the devotional songs rendered by the great Alvas were almost extinct, it was Nathamuni who compiled them and took pains to put them in order and named them as Dravida Veda (Nathamuni was born in Viranarayanaapuram – now Kallu Manjar Koil, a township 15 miles away from Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu). He lived between 823-924 AD. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and many Sastras and a yogi. He revived the festival called Tiruvadhyayaganotsava – festival of recitation of Divya Prabandhas, which had stopped after the time of Tirumangai Alvar. He set them to music and revived their singing along with the Vedic recitation. He also organised a special kind of dance called Araiyaar Seve and made arrangements to carry on the same in the Srirangam and other Vishnu temples. The Srivaishnavas considered the Divya Prabandhas equal to Sanskrit Veda and this has continued from the 9th century onwards and so, they are being respected as Ubhaya Vedantis.

The compositions of the Alvars have much musical value. This was noticed and understood by the scholars through the services of Nathamuni. He is regarded as the first Acharya in Srivaishnava tradition. These prabandhas were sung in ancient Tamil ragas or form. But in course of time, the practice of singing them has disappeared. Now they are recited even the

pronunciation of words is not clear. Each person recites in his own way according to his voice.

The Alvars ^{were} contemporaries of some Saiva Nayanars. Whose outpourings are known as Tiru Vembavai, Thiru Vachakam, Tiruppugal, Tevaram etc. played a major role in the Bhakti movement and revived Hinduism in the middle ages. This period has been rightly termed as Isai-Pann Music's Golden Age.

It is known that the Alvar's Prabandhas were sung in pleasant ragas. Now, we have to find out the ragas of these prabandhas of the 103 panns of ancient Tamil music, about 28 panns have been recognised, with the help of the panns of Tevaram. In course of time, the names of the panns have changed into the names of ragas, only 24 panns have been surviving. In those days panns were classified into day ragas, night ragas and all-time ragas. The Tevaram and Divya Prabandhas served as the source of inspiration for the fertile growth of folk songs called Siddar Paadal.

Tevarams have what is known as Kattales (कटले). Similarly Prabandhas have ^tostus (ओत्तु). This indicates the rhythm of the song. Based on the Pan Isai, it is possible to throw light on the music of the Prabandhas. Tevarams are sung generally in aadi, tripata and rupaka talas – time-measures at present. By following the metre of the Prabandhas, they can be sung set to these talas. The late Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, the pole-star of Karnatak music, set the 30 pasurams of the Tiruppavai to delectable ragas and used to sing one pasuram invariably in every one of his concerts. Similarly, another great musician of yester years, late T.K. Rangachariar set some of the pasurams of the Alvars to music and sing them in his concerts and popularised them.

In the 18th century Guruswamy Desikar of Tiruvarur being a musician, revised the practice of singing Tevarams in Siva temples. Before these became extinct, following the old path or tradition, Tamil Isai Sangham of Chennai, has attempted its revival from 1949 and this has begun to pay rich results.

As stated earlier, Tevarams and prabandhas were sung in panns. Though there have been 103 panns, Only 24 of them have been used. Similar to these, the identical present day ragas are – Gandharm – Gayakapriya, Indalam – Lalita Panchamam (Mayamalava Gowla) Pancham – Aahiri, Seekamarani – Nandanama Kriya, Kurinji – Malahari, Vyala Kurinji – Saurashtra, Kausikam – Bhairavi, Sendaruti – Madhyamavati, Nattappadai – Nata Kurinji, Takkesi – Kambhoji, Sevvayi – Yadukula Kambhoji, Panjaram – Kedara gowla, Kolli – Sindhu Kannada, Payamtakka – Suddha Saveri, Megaraga Kuruji – Neelambari, Payam Pajula – Sankarabharana, Sādāri – Pantuvarali, Tiruttandakam – Begade, Kaantaaram – Navaraj, Andalakurinji – Saila Desakshi, Purancermai – Sreekanthi etc.

The system of singing the Divya Prabandha established by Nathamuni is now extinct. It is very difficult to know in which ragas they used to sing. Just as the singing of Tevarams has been revived, there is the need to do research and launch a movement of singing the Prabandhas as they were sung previously. Sri Rama Bharati has sung some pasurams and the cassettes are available. In the Sanskrit Research Academy of Melukote, a 500 year old manuscript of Pasurams has come to light. It has the names of the ragas and ostus. Research has been going on in this regard. It will help us to know in what ragas these Prabandhas used to be sung 500 or more years ago. This discovery and research will pave the way for not only reviving, but also singing the prabandhas in a better and attractive manner.

सप्तस्वरैः समस्तं यो जगदेतत् चराचरम् ।
संजीवयति विश्वत्मा सन्नो विष्णुः प्रसीदतु ॥